

LOSS OF SAGINAW

Disaster Recalled By the Sinking of the Maine.

OCEAN ISLAND TO KAUAI

Fate of Lieut. Talbot and Four Men Near Hanalei—The Rescuing Party—Corvette Levant.

Since the loss of 253 men of the U. S. Navy and the noble battleship Maine in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, many lists have been made of similar disasters in all waters. Most of the residents of Honolulu have a more or less clear recollection of the loss of life and ships in the hurricane at Apai, Samoa, in 1889. Ships able to travel after the experience with the storm put in here for repairs. About 143 men, Americans and Germans were lost in that hurricane. Of the warships Trenton, Vandalla, Nipsie and Calliope, the last named only was able to steam out of the harbor and ride the storm. The other three struck the reef.

Much closer home to the people of Hawaii is the sorrowful story of the loss of the U. S. S. Saginaw, in the year 1870. Of this ship and her fate the accounts say:

One of the most remarkable of these catastrophes overtook the Saginaw in 1870. It was a steamer of the fourth rate and carried seventy-five men and officers. Midway in the vast expanse of the Pacific ocean the vessel was wrecked upon a mountain peak. This peak, rising three and one-half miles above the water, is known as Ocean Island, one of the Midway group. On this uninhabited and inhospitable rock the voyagers were thrown, and thought themselves fortunate to get ashore without the loss of a life.

Captain Montgomery Seward, who was in command, ascertained by taking a reckoning that he was somewhere more than 1,000 miles northwest from the Hawaiian group, the nearest inhabited land. So he and his ship's crew set to work, and with pieces of wreckage from the lost vessel, made such additions of the gig as would render it seaworthy. In this little boat, only 28 feet in length, Lieutenant Talbot and five men started off for help. The voyage was perilous enough in so frail a craft through the mighty swells of the Pacific. In 36 days the most westerly island of the Hawaiian group was reached. A landing was attempted through the surf, the small boat was capsized and Talbot and four of his men were drowned. Only one member of the expedition saved himself. He could not swim a stroke, yet he had survived six shipwrecks before. His name was Halford, and for his services in conducting a rescuing party back to Ocean Island he was made a gunner in the Navy. The boat in which the famous voyage was made is preserved at Annapolis.

Ocean Island is a low reef instead of a high mountain peak. Otherwise the story is correct in almost every particular. The "westerly island" was of course Kauai. "Captain" Montgomery Seward is now a rear-admiral and was recently in command of the North Atlantic squadron. In speaking of the Saginaw affair, a white man born on Kauai, and there in 1870, said yesterday:

"It was an awful thing for Lieut. Talbot and his four men to lose their lives on Kauai after what they had gone through. They arrived off Kauai during the night. We learned that Talbot gave orders to tack away from land and went to sleep, he being quite exhausted. The men were worn out with loss of sleep and with having but little food and water. They allowed the boat to get in too close and she was carried on the coral by the heavy swell then on. This reef is between Hanalei Bay and Kallihwai. At low water it is exposed. Had the party waited till daylight natives would have gone off from shore and taken them into the mouth of Hanalei Bay. Two men were alive as found by the island people in the morning. The name of the sailor with Halford I forget, but I remember Halford quite well and have seen him in Honolulu since. The other man died in a few hours. Some of the bodies were not found for several days. The remains of Lieut. Talbot were brought to Honolulu and placed in Nuanu cemetery. He had the name of being a magnificent young fellow and he must have been to have made that trip as a volunteer. They had decked over the gig and made quite a decent craft of it. You will sometimes hear the story that the gig is in use by natives on Kauai, but that is incorrect. It was brought to Honolulu and I believe the statement that it is now in possession of the academy at Annapolis is right."

A sailor man whose name if given would be recognized by every one in Honolulu, was sought out for a story of the sending of the rescue party from Honolulu to Ocean Island. He said:

"The Government dispatched the old steamer Kilanea, of which S. G. Wilder was agent to pick up the crew of the Saginaw. Halford went along. The vessel was owned by the Government and the authorities selected Capt. Tom Long as the best man available out of a whole lot in the field, to command the expedition. His first officer was Capt. John Rice, who after many active years in seagoing has retired from the captaincy of the Tug Elen. Probably there are others in Honolulu who were in the crew. Capt. Tom Long had all the compass and chronometer that he did have for the trip in his watch and he fetched up the island in good time and without the least trouble in making his reckonings. He was a fine navigator. The officers of the Saginaw were greatly pained to learn the fate of Lieut. Talbot and as the next subject of interest looked at Tom Long taking the sun and making 'fun-

ars' with his watch. After they reached Washington these officers sent Long a splendid chronometer watch that is most likely still in the family here. I heard lately that John F. Colburn, of this city had become the custodian of the present. The Long family lived on Maui. The captain has been dead a number of years. He was a very interesting man and a man of fine ability. He had been educated and trained as a surveyor and civil engineer, but for some reason, probably for the pure love of adventure, shipped before the mast on a whaling cruise. His bark was laid up for several months somewhere in the South. When it was time to weigh anchor again the captain and mate discovered that they had forgotten how to 'take the sun.' They had also left their 'Bowditch' and other navigating literature at home. Young Long noticed the two officers figuring by the hour and at times would lounge around to where they were hopelessly working. The captain on one occasion glared at the sailor and inquired if he knew anything about making a reckoning. Long replied that

LOSS OF LEVANT

Spar That Was Found on the Island of Hawaii.

MR. H. M. WHITNEY'S NARRATIVE

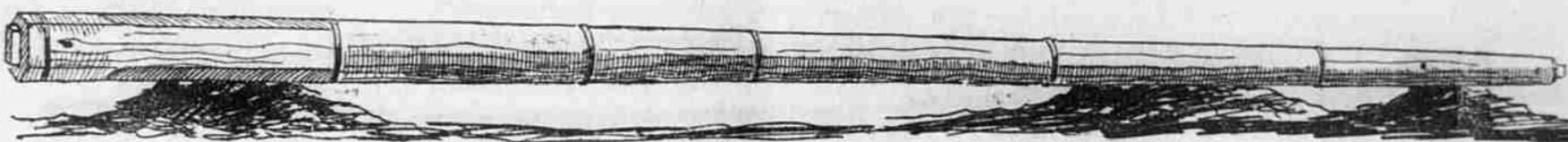
Had Communication With the United States Government—Work of Native Fishermen.

The recent loss of a large Atlantic steamship, by collision with a wreck in mid-ocean; and also the late report of a ship's hull, bottom-up, having



REAR ADMIRAL MONTGOMERY SEWARD. Admiral Seward, commander of the White Squadron that is watching Cuban developments, is 61 years old and has spent 46 years in the navy. He has been under fire scores of times.

MAST OF UNITED STATES SHIP LEVANT.



Sketched by H. M. Whitney, August 3, 1861.

he thought he knew all about it and at once proved his claim to knowledge. He was invited to bring his chest aft and upon arrival in San Francisco left the whaler and became commander of a big trading schooner. In time he settled in the Islands and was always a prominent and well liked man here.

Honolulu has one other mention in the list of appalling U. S. Navy disasters. These are the few lines in which the loss of the Levant, a corvette, is told:

Few disasters at sea are so impressively tragic as the disappearance of a great vessel of war that sails out of port with a numerous ship's company, a floating and garrisoned fortress, and is never heard from again. Many a craft of Uncle Sam's navy has met that fate. In 1860 the corvette Levant left Honolulu for Panama. She went down somewhere in the Pacific with 212 souls on board.

As the Levant was in port quite a time, her officers and men had many friends ashore and for their mysterious fate there was sympathy in Honolulu. A few days after the corvette left port a terrific northeast blow came on. In that storm the vessel was broken and foundered. H. M. Whitney has in his possession a piece of mast believed to have been a part of the works of the Levant. The corvette took from Honolulu the records of the American hospital here. These were valuable papers.

Besides hundreds of people ashore the officers and men of the flagship Baltimore and the gunboat Bennington, here from the United States, have evidenced much interest in the account given in this paper last week of the wreck of the Saginaw in 1870, on Ocean Island, and of the disastrous trip to Kauai of Lieutenant Talbot and a volunteer crew sent to ask for rescue. On Friday last, an Advertiser reporter was told by a citizen who for years has been familiar with naval matters, that Halford, after all his hairbreadth escapes at sea, had finally been drowned in the creek between Mare Island and Vallejo. This is a mistake. The authority is Captain Nichols, of the gunboat Bennington, and of course he knows. Captain Nichols sends the Advertiser a note to the effect that "Wm. Halford, gunner, who was with Lieutenant Talbot in the Saginaw gig," is still alive and is on duty at the Mare Island Navy Yard.

Within recent years a number of female bull fighters have made their appearance in Spanish cities. In Barcelona much applause has been won lately by two German women, Lola and Angelina Patel, who, after several years' training in a circus, entered the bull ring.

been seen off Hawaii by one of the packets plying between San Francisco and Honolulu—have directed attention to the occasional disappearance of ships at sea, of which no definite reports have ever been obtained. As the loss of the Atlantic steamship referred to may interest the reader, the account is inserted here:

NEW YORK, February 12.—The American line steamer St. Louis, Captain Randle, which arrived today from Southampton, reports the loss at sea of the Holland-American line steamer Veendam, from Rotterdam for New York. The passengers and crew of the Veendam were saved by the St. Louis.

At quarantine, Captain Stenger of the Veendam reported as follows: "The Veendam left Rotterdam, February 3, with a general cargo, nine cabin, 118 steerage passengers and 85 crew, bound for New York. February 6 at about 6:17 p. m., the steamer struck a submerged wreck or wreckage, which probably tore a hole in the ship's bottom and broke her propeller shaft. We immediately set all pumps to work, but notwithstanding this, the water gained on us."

"At 1:30 a. m., we observed the mast-head lights of a large steamer which proved to be the St. Louis of the American line, bound from Southampton for New York. We hailed her, and reported that our ship was sinking, and that we wished to be taken off. At 1:40 a. m., we commenced to transfer our passengers and crew, using three boats of the St. Louis and one of our ship's. Our men were kept at the pumps."

"At 4:53 o'clock Monday morning, everybody had been transferred to the St. Louis. When the last boat left, the Veendam was laboring very heavily and sinking rapidly by the stern. The transfer of the passengers and crew took, notwithstanding the great difficulties and high sea running, three hours and ten minutes, and was accomplished without the slightest accident. As the wreck was a dangerous obstruction to navigation, we decided to set her on fire, which was done."

Among the marine disasters, in the Pacific, of which no record has ever been received, is that of the U. S. Ship Levant, under command of Captain Hunt, which occurred about 38 years ago. She was a vessel of perhaps 1,800 tons burthen, with about 150 men, more or less, and arrived at Honolulu on her last trip, June 17, 1860. After a stay of two months in port, she sailed in August for the Coast, via Lahaia and Hilo, leaving the latter port in October of the same year. After that, she was never seen or heard from, the general and probably correct supposition having been that she foundered in a very heavy storm which swept across the Pacific in the autumn of that year. The disaster must have been so sudden, that no time was given to save the lives of those on board by taking to the boats or building a raft. Whatever may have been the cause of her disappearance, it is quite certain that no one on her survived. In the spring of the following year, the U.

S. war steamer Wyoming was dispatched from Panama by the U. S. Government, in search of her, and called at Honolulu. She returned to Panama without learning anything regarding the missing vessel.

It was in the summer of 1861, that the writer, then making one of his periodical trips around Hawaii, arrived at Waiohinu, in Kau. While there, a native fisherman reported that a large ship's spar had floated on shore, and lay on the rocks near Kaalualu, which is the most southern point of Hawaii. Subsequently, it was learned that this same spar, or one similar to it, had been seen in the water off shore, by fishermen, some two months previous (June, 1861), but it had disappeared.

Being at that time, editor and publisher of the Pacific Commercial Advertiser, the man's story furnished sufficient inducement to the writer to visit the spot and examine the spar. In company with the late Charles N. Spencer, who was then living at Waiohinu, we visited Kaalualu village, the native fisherman having been secured as guide. A ride of two hours, and a walk of half a mile over rough lava rocks brought us to the place where the spar lay perched five or six feet above low water mark. Mr. S. being an old sailor recognized it at once at the mast of a large ship, it having measured over 70 feet in length. Further examination showed that it must have belonged to a war vessel, as it bore marks of having had several strong iron bands and the remains of a gun-rack, which could only have belonged to a warship. A sketch of it was then made by the writer, with measurements of its length, girth, and the rust marks of the iron bands. A chip was cut from it to show the wood it was made of.

Both Mr. Spencer and the writer became convinced that this was one of the masts of the missing Levant. On arrival at Honolulu, the story was told, but the chip taken from the mast was claimed by the ship carpenters to be New Zealand Kauri gum pine, and not an American pine. This for a time cast a doubt as to its being the Levant's mast, some thinking it more likely belonged to a British ship, the loss of which had not been reported. However, the account of the finding of the spar, with its measurements and description and the chip referred to, were sent to the Navy Department at Washington. An examination into the history of the Levant was ordered and made, and it was found that she had once put into Auckland, New Zealand, disabled, and while there was fitted with a new mast, made of the Kauri gum pine. This investigation

try for the trifling cost of a total \$3,200 in two years. The change would not in any manner touch annexation prospects. If he thought it would harm the pending treaty's future in any way he would cease to advocate the change.

Mr. McCandless said he was fixed in his determination to oppose the amendment. He did not believe in tinkering with the Constitution while annexation was still in sight. He could not learn that there was an avalanche of sentiment forcing the legislators to work for amendments of any sort to the Constitution.

Quite an extended and a very good address was made by Mr. Gear. He thought the time for setting into motion the machinery for a change was opportune. He had carefully considered the question in all its phases and strictly on its merits. He was an annexationist and had an abiding faith that union with the United States was to be brought about. He could not see how such a change to the Constitution as was proposed could have any effect on the treaty. He thought the movement a progressive one.

Mr. Logan was in favor of the amendment. He said that some people would be satisfied to have about four Representatives and one Senator and to have all public discussions conducted by the Chamber of Commerce and the Planters' Association.

Mr. Poepe went into an analysis of the question. Was there apparent any necessity for such an amendment at this or any other time. Had there been a long agitation for it. Among those who were sending up the cry of a desire for more representative Government were men who declined to be represented under present conditions. Were they sincere in advocating this measure. Why do they not come into the fold now, or do they want to wait till the House is made stronger so they can have eight more Royalists in the Legislature. (Mr. Testa—Of course: you'll get them bye and bye.) The speaker was also against the first proposed amendment to the Constitution, the one to have the oath changed. Monarchy is gone. It is dead and must be kept dead. There are people who will realize this after a time and if we do not get annexation, they will take the oath and vote with this amendment to increase the House membership with Royalists. (Mr. Testa—That's so, too.)

Several of the gentlemen who had been engaged to speak failed to appear. President Murray, of the League, closed the meeting with a few remarks. He said he had every assurance that the

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RUBBER STAMPS

AT THE GAZETTE OFFICE.



THE MAINE BOARD OF INQUIRY.

The officers investigating the Maine disaster are well qualified for the important work. President Sampson commands the Iowa, Chadwick is captain of the New York, and Potter and Marix are executive officers of the New York and Vermont, respectively.

dispelled all doubts, and the navy department became satisfied that it belonged to the missing ship, and clearly proved her fate. Nothing farther has ever been learned regarding her, or her captain, officers and crew.

H. M. WHITNEY.

Honolulu, March 21, 1898.

IN OPEN MEETING. Addresses on the Constitutional Amendment.

Messrs. Achi, Gear, Logan, L. L. McCandless, Poepe and Murray, were the principal speakers at the Tuesday open meeting of the American League. The topic discussed was the reappointment amendment to the Constitution as presented in the House by Mr. Achi and amended by Mr. Gear. It is proposed to have 23 instead of fifteen members in the lower branch. The bill has had its first reading and was kept alive by the close vote of eight to seven.

Mr. Achi said that if the opponents of his measure held to their present arguments they might as well contend that four men were enough to legislate for the people and then enforce the laws. He insisted that the time had come to branch out in the direction of more representative Government, like the United States. As to expense, he said that the amendment gave eight more brains for the service of the coun-

natives in large numbers would in time register and vote and that then constitutional amendments would be in order even if at this time they were tabu. There had been a request for a vote of the sense of the meeting on the Achi amendment as amended by Mr. Gear. The vote was taken and was largely in favor of the change.

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